



**Fourmile Creek Watershed Management Authority
Meeting Minutes**

April 24, 2014 AT 4 PM
Public Services Building
City of Ankeny
220 W. 1st Street
Ankeny, Iowa

- I. Call to order – Cindy Valin - 4pm
 - a. Introductions – Attendees introduced themselves.
- II. Approval of the minutes from January 23, 2014 meeting. Motion by Cindy Valin, 2nd by Vern Willey, motion carried.
- III. Watershed management plan update – Kyle Riley passed out the Four Mile Creek Watershed Management Plan April 2014 Update and an updated Four Mile Creek Watershed Management Plan Working Group candidates list. Mark Land reported that the first two working group meetings had taken place on March 5, 2014 and March 7, 2014. The initial meeting was organized around getting to know each other and asking what information they need to make the decisions for each working group. Two elements were recognized do require additional study from the original Watershed Study. First, the original study was more focused on floods and additional work on water quality was needed. Second, additional input from agricultural groups and developers was needed.

Focus groups for agriculture and developers were established to obtain additional input. The meeting with the agricultural focus group was held on April 2, 2014. The agriculture group was made up of local agricultural property owners in the watershed that were contacted by the Polk County Farm Bureau. The meeting was held at the Polk County Farm Bureau office. There were approximately 16 property owners in attendance. The group provided excellent input on the watershed. Generally, they were very interested what was going on in the watershed and being part of a solution. They were not as interested in additional regulations and having mandates for specific requirements. Based on the feedback, Mark Land noted this group would be interested being part of this process and working one-on-one to implement proposed recommendations. Vern Willey asked if there was discussion about how to do tiling. Mark Land stated they spend quite a bit of time discussing tiles and they were receptive on trying to figure out all the options and implement improvements.

The meeting with the developer focus group was held on April 7, 2014. There were only six developers in attendance due to a conflict with the Developer Council meeting. While the agriculture focus group had a variation of opinions, the developer focus group was consistent in their views. The developer's main points were consistency in the rules, providing uniformity between jurisdictions, and considering incentive-based policies. Vern Wiley stated that they want incentives to do a good job but doing a good job should just be the norm. Rich Leopold noted the desire for consistency dictates the need for a strong policy. He also stated that he is not against incentive-based policies, but the voluntary incentive-based water quality program in the state is not working very well. Mark Land noted the developers asked him to give a presentation about the Authority at their monthly meeting in June.

Mark Land asked the group if they are aware of other efforts, at least in Polk County, where a group is trying to develop consistent standards between jurisdictions. Vern Wiley answered the Mid-Iowa Construction Code Committee made up of building officials is trying to get everybody on the same building code. He also noted the Capital Crossroads group is going to try to address that subject.

Mark Land stated the second working group meetings are scheduled for May and the final working group meets to develop the recommendations will be held around July. The recommendations will then come back to the main group for a final say as to what is important to Four Mile Creek WMA. These recommendations will have wider impacts than just Four Mile Creek since most of the jurisdictions include other watersheds and the policy will typically be set city-wide. Rich Leopold stated the one issue that keeps coming up is the practicality of greenbelts, how they are administered, and how they are funded.

Mark discussed the Fourmile Creek Watershed and Greenway Community Event held on April 21, 2014. It included fishing, water testing, music, and many educational events. Attendees had an opportunity to tell what they thought was important to the watershed by adding features to an interactive map. Bob Rice thought that having an interactive map at the state fair, maybe inside the DNR booth, would offer people opportunity to comment.

Mark stated during the next working group meetings in May they will focus on taking the information that they asked for and have the overall schedule to have the final recommendations approved by this group by the January meeting next year.

IV. Funding Updates –

- a. WIRB Application – Jennifer Welch told the group that the WIRB Application submitted during the last submittal period was not funded. She is still working on the concepts on how we would address the farmers and rural land owners in the watershed and the programs and methods for education and outreach on no-till and cover crops.
- b. Metro Waste Authority – Mark Land stated that the Metro Waste Authority has a smaller grant that is due June 6 for up to \$2,500 that could be used for something like a state fair display, stream clean-up, recycling, composting, pollution prevention, energy efficiency, or environment education. It is limited to Polk County.

- c. Corp of Engineers – Mark Land stated he and Bob Rice have had a conversation with the Corps of Engineers about watershed management funding. In order to solicit funding from the Corps of Engineers, the Corps has to assign a person and funding for that person to even look at the project. They have assigned a person and assigned them a budget to work with us to try to develop a scope and determine how they could be of assistance.
- d. Homeland Security – Mark Land stated they just came out with a new hazard mitigation funding opportunity. It is a national opportunity and is for repetitive flood loss. Funding is available that hasn't been spent with disaster declarations and it might be something for Des Moines to consider for Fourmile Creek buyouts. The Flood Mitigation Assistance Program has \$89 million nationally to buyout repetitive flood loss and is a competitive process with specific requirements.
- e. Rich Leopold asked if there was another round of SRF sponsored projects. David Miller answered that if you are taking out SRF loans you can add a sponsored project to it. It is competitive and they will issue it separate from the loan but you must apply with the loan application. Des Moines is doing this with their southern tier projects; they are getting a loan on that and applying it to Four Mile Creek stream banks. Jennifer Welch stated the second round was due in February and they may do another round this fall. The group discussed the cut off dates for the new loans and keeping it going as long as it is successful.
- f. Frank Cownie expressed concern about the number of Watershed Management Authorities being created. He noted they are all looking for funding and pretty soon we are going to be competing against each other/ourselves. What should our strategy be to move this project along? The group discussed each of the watersheds has to come up with their own individual a plan. Each stage of the plan and implementation has a cost and the funding comes from a variety of different sources. There will competition for the funding.

V. Jurisdiction updates

- a. Mark Land – Discussed buyouts and SRF funding which the WRA was successful in obtaining. Polk County and Des Moines are working on an agreement where Des Moines will acquire properties in Polk County's name. A detailed plan to develop the acquired properties into a greenbelt concept will be developed.
- b. Bob Rice discussed the Big Creek project and would like a presentation to the full board or to one of the groups because they have had a lot of success in what they are doing in working with the land owners.
- c. Amy Bryant updated the group about the work being done to Tributary A in Ankeny. It is a stream restoration that will be starting in the next month. All work will be in done people's backyards.
- d. Rich Leopold talked about the work that was done at Thomas Mitchell Park and what they have done along Camp Creek. They re-did all the stream banks and have some limestone step-downs into the creek. This could maybe happen in the upper regions of Four Mile Creek; the lower areas might be too big and fast.

VI. Adjournment – the meeting was adjourned at 5pm.